

## **D#10 HELIPADS**

### **SUPPLEMENTAL STAFF REPORT**

**SUMMARY:** This Supplemental Staff Report provides responses to issues that were raised at a Planning Commission meeting regarding amendments to the Renton Municipal Code Development Regulations (Title IV). It also includes additional information that staff has identified as being necessary to include in the analysis for amendments.

#### **General Description**

In 2008, the City amended Title IV to allow the limited use of helipads in the R-8 (Residential-eight units per net acre). In a Planning and Development Committee report issued July 14, 2008, the Committee advised Council to adopt the amendment to Title IV and also recommended a broader review of the use of helipads in other zones. Staff took a proposal to allow helipads as an accessory use in a number of industrial and commercial zones to the Planning Commission.

Planning Commission Issue: *The Planning Commission asked staff to reconsider an alternate proposal that leaves helipads as a Hearing Examiner conditional use, only allowing them to be permitted outright for medical institutions.*

Staff Response: Until 2008, helipads were allowed if accessory to a primary use only with a Hearing Examiner Conditional Use Permit in all industrial zones (Light Industrial, Medium Industrial, Heavy Industrial) in the Employment Area Valley land use designation, in the CO (Commercial Office) zone, in the COR (Commercial/Office/Residential) zone, in part of the CA (Commercial Arterial) zone, and in the UC-N2 (Urban Center- North 2). Last year, helipads were permitted outright if accessory to a primary use for those portions of the R-8 zone that fronted Lake Washington and if able to meet a number of criteria.

Given that under limited circumstances, a helipad can be operated from residential property without a use permit from the City, it is only fair to allow medical institutions, such as the hospital to be allowed to operate a helipad. Although there are limited areas in which a helipad may be operated safely, the Planning Commission reasoned that the City still needed to ability to regulate and condition helipad uses that are accessory to commercial and industrial businesses in order to avoid impacts associated with noise, avoid incompatible land uses, and ensure safety.

#### **Planning Commission Recommendation**

Adopt the following revisions to Title IV:

- Disallow the use of helipads in the CA zone.
- Allow helipads, if they are accessory to the primary use of a medical institution in the CO zone subject to the following conditions: the helipad is architecturally and functionally integrated into the primary use, the helipad is approved by the FAA, flight hours are

limited to 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. except for emergencies, and the property owner keeps documentation of compliance with the above requirements.

- Continue to require helipads as a Hearing Examiner Conditional Use in the IL, IM, IH, COR, and UC-N2 zones, and for non medical institution uses in the CO zone.
- Continue to require commercial heliports as a Hearing Examiner Conditional Use in the IM (Medium Industrial) and UC-N2 zones.